



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION II
EDISON, NEW JERSEY 08837

COMPLETED
FILE COPY

POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

Site Name: Brooklyn Union Gas Company--Metropolitan Works

Address: 2nd Ave. & 12th St. (Gowanus Canal), Brooklyn, NY 11215

County: Kings

EPA I.D. No.: NYD980532006

Summary:

This was formerly the site of a coal-gasification plant, purchased by Brooklyn Union Gas (B.U.G.) Company at the turn of the century. One of the by-products produced during the plant's operating years was a hydrocarbon tar which was temporarily stored on site until sold for use in roofing or road surfacing. According to B.U.G., when the plant was decommissioned in 1948, all remaining tars were reportedly removed and the facility was razed. Currently, the one-acre property is owned by Bruno's Truck Sales (on a dirt lot) and is partly occupied by a Path-Mark Store (on a paved lot).

NYSDEC inspected the site on August 1, 1986 and found "no visible signs of contamination". Although the possibility of leachate into the adjacent Gowanus Canal was cited as a concern, current leaching would be minimal because that portion of the site is now paved over and, also, 38 years have passed since any tar spills may have occurred. Groundwater contamination is also a possibility, but is of limited concern due to existing poor quality of area groundwater (not used as a water supply).

Priority for Inspection: High ____
Medium ____
Low X (See attachment to Part 1 of PA form.)
None ____

Recommendations:

Based on NYSDEC's findings and their decision not to put this site on the State Registry, no immediate action by EPA is required.

Prepared by: Amy J. Brochu, Environmental Engineer
U.S. EPA, Environmental Services Division

Date: September 4, 1986

154426





POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT
PART 1 - SITE INFORMATION AND ASSESSMENT

1. IDENTIFICATION

01 STATE 02 SITE NUMBER
NY D980532006

II. SITE NAME AND LOCATION

01 SITE NAME (Legal, common, or descriptive name of site) Brooklyn Union Gas--Metropolitan Works	02 STREET, ROUTE NO., OR SPECIFIC LOCATION IDENTIFIER Second Ave. and 12th Street, Gowanus Canal				
03 CITY Brooklyn	04 STATE NY	05 ZIP CODE 11215	06 COUNTY Kings	07 COUNTY CODE 047	08 CONG DIST 6-19
09 COORDINATES LATITUDE 40 40 15 N		LONGITUDE 073 59 45 W			

10 DIRECTIONS TO SITE (Starting from nearest public road)

Brooklyn Battery Tunnel to Hamilton Avenue, left on 2nd Ave. to 12th St.

III. RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

01 OWNER (If known) Bruno's Truck Sales	02 STREET (Business, mailing, residential) 435 Hamilton Avenue			
03 CITY Brooklyn	04 STATE NY	05 ZIP CODE 11215	06 TELEPHONE NUMBER (718) 965-2400	
07 OPERATOR (If known and different from owner) former owner--Brooklyn Union Gas Co.	08 STREET (Business, mailing, residential) 195 Montague Street			
09 CITY Brooklyn	10 STATE NY	11 ZIP CODE 11201	12 TELEPHONE NUMBER (718) 403-3053	(Kate Hartnett, Engr. Dept.)
13 TYPE OF OWNERSHIP (Check one) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> A. PRIVATE <input type="checkbox"/> B. FEDERAL: _____ (Agency name) <input type="checkbox"/> C. STATE <input type="checkbox"/> D. COUNTY <input type="checkbox"/> E. MUNICIPAL <input type="checkbox"/> F. OTHER: _____ (Specify) <input type="checkbox"/> G. UNKNOWN				

14 OWNER/OPERATOR NOTIFICATION ON FILE (Check all that apply)

☐ A. RCRA 3001 DATE RECEIVED: _____ MONTH DAY YEAR ☒ B. UNCONTROLLED WASTE SITE (CERCLA 103 or) DATE RECEIVED: 6 / 9 / 81 MONTH DAY YEAR ☐ C. NONE

IV. CHARACTERIZATION OF POTENTIAL HAZARD

01 ON SITE INSPECTION <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES DATE 8 / 1 / 86 MONTH DAY YEAR <input type="checkbox"/> NO	BY (Check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> A. EPA <input type="checkbox"/> B. EPA CONTRACTOR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C. STATE <input type="checkbox"/> D. OTHER CONTRACTOR <input type="checkbox"/> E. LOCAL HEALTH OFFICIAL <input type="checkbox"/> F. OTHER: _____ (Specify) CONTRACTOR NAME(S): _____
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02 SITE STATUS (Check one) <input type="checkbox"/> A. ACTIVE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B. INACTIVE <input type="checkbox"/> C. UNKNOWN	03 YEARS OF OPERATION BEGINNING YEAR 1871 ENDING YEAR 1948 <input type="checkbox"/> UNKNOWN
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04 DESCRIPTION OF SUBSTANCES POSSIBLY PRESENT, KNOWN, OR ALLEGED
Possible spills of hydrocarbon tars (containing benzene, pyridine, cresols, toluene, naphthalene, hydrogen sulfide, and phenol) occurring prior to 1948. During years of operation, tars were temporarily stored in on-site holding tanks.

05 DESCRIPTION OF POTENTIAL HAZARD TO ENVIRONMENT AND/OR POPULATION
Possible soil contamination with trace amounts of hydrocarbon tar. Potential leachate into groundwater (not used for drinking). Little potential for surface runoff into Gowanus Canal because adjacent portion of site is paved over. All impacts reduced by passing of time and excavation of soils.

V. PRIORITY ASSESSMENT

31 PRIORITY FOR INSPECTION (Check one. If high or medium is checked, complete Part 2 - Waste Assessment and Part 4 - Description of Hazardous Conditions and Impacts)
☐ A. HIGH (inspection required promptly) ☐ B. MEDIUM (inspection required) ☒ C. LOW * (inspect on time schedule basis) ☐ D. NONE *SEE ATTACHMENT (No further action needed, continue current remediation) *

VI. INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM

01 CONTACT Diana Messina	02 OF (Agency/Organization) EPA/ESD/SMB/Superfund Support Section		03 TELEPHONE NUMBER (201) 321-6776	
04 PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSESSMENT Amy J. Brochu	05 AGENCY EPA	06 ORGANIZATION ESD/SMB/Sprfnd.	07 TELEPHONE NUMBER (201) 906-6802	08 DATE 9 / 4 / 86 MONTH DAY YEAR

Attachment to PA Form

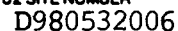
Background on Former Coal-Gasification Plants
(Brooklyn Union Gas Company Sites)

The thirteen Brooklyn Union Gas locations labelled as "Works" are all former coal-gasification plants that began recovering natural gas from coal and oil for sale and distribution to customers in the mid-1800's. Just before the turn of the century, the Brooklyn Union Gas Company (B.U.G.) began purchasing these small plants. By 1950, eight of the thirteen works purchased by B.U.G. had been decommissioned and the remaining five plants were shut down during the following decade. Today, according to B.U.G., nothing remains of the original facilities; in fact, most of the properties were sold by B.U.G. and reportedly paved over as parking lots or playgrounds or excavated for building construction. (In a few cases, B.U.G. retained some property in the vicinity and constructed a gate station there; however, the gate stations were reportedly not built on the same sites as the old facilities but, rather, across the street or on the corner of the lot.)

When the gas manufacturing plants were still in operation, a by-product of their processes was a hydrocarbon tar which contained amounts of the following hazardous substances: benzene, pyridine, cresols, naphthalene, toluene, hydrogen sulfide, and phenol. (For this reason, Brooklyn Union Gas Company filed a "Notification of Hazardous Waste Site" form for each of these locations in 1981.) This by-product tar was temporarily stored in holding tanks at the plants until it could be sold for use in roofing or road surfacing, or sold to chemical companies for its constituents. As each plant was decommissioned, all remaining tars were reportedly removed from the holding tanks and sold, and the facilities themselves were razed (according to record searches and investigations conducted by B.U.G. back in 1981).

Because all of these facilities were torn down at least 25 years ago and some of the sites are now covered with pavement or buildings, it would be difficult to determine whether any significant spills of hazardous materials had occurred during the operation of the coal gasification plants. Even if some tar had been spilled, the contaminated soils would most likely have been mixed throughout the clean soils when the sites were cleared of the old facilities. Therefore, there is little reason to suspect that anything more than trace amounts of tar would remain in the soils at each site today. And, because area groundwater is not used as a potable water supply, any leachate from the sites is of minimal concern.

Nevertheless, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) currently has plans to inspect all of the Brooklyn Union Gas locations by the end of the calendar year. In view of the difficulties mentioned above, the inspections may serve only to confirm that the sites were indeed completely cleared of the gas manufacturing plants (as B.U.G. maintains) and that new structures have been built there. Instead of duplicating State efforts, EPA has arranged to be kept informed of all NYSDEC inspections conducted at B.U.G. sites (both former and existing) and to be copied on the individual inspection reports as each one is completed. Therefore, the need for an EPA inspection has been given a "low" priority in Part 1 of the PA forms completed for these thirteen former coal-gasification sites.



☐ I. HIGHLY VOLATILE
☐ J. EXPLOSIVE
☐ K. REACTIVE
☐ L. INCOMPATIBLE
☐ M. NOT APPLICABLE



POTENTIAL HAZARDOUS WASTE SITE
PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT
PART 3 - DESCRIPTION OF HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS

I. IDENTIFICATION

01 STATE NY 02 SITE NUMBER D980532006

II. HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS

01 ☐ A. GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ B. SURFACE WATER CONTAMINATION

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ C. CONTAMINATION OF AIR

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ D. FIRE/EXPLOSIVE CONDITIONS

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ E. DIRECT CONTACT

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ F. CONTAMINATION OF SOIL

03 AREA POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____
(Acres)

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ G. DRINKING WATER CONTAMINATION

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ H. WORKER EXPOSURE/INJURY

03 WORKERS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ I. POPULATION EXPOSURE/INJURY

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED



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PART 3 - DESCRIPTION OF HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS

I. IDENTIFICATION

01 STATE NY 02 SITE NUMBER D980532006

II. HAZARDOUS CONDITIONS AND INCIDENTS (Continued)

01 ☐ J. DAMAGE TO FLORA
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ K. DAMAGE TO FAUNA
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION (include name(s) of species)

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ L. CONTAMINATION OF FOOD CHAIN
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ M. UNSTABLE CONTAINMENT OF WASTES
(Spills/leakage/standing liquids/leaking drums)

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

03 POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

01 ☐ N. DAMAGE TO OFFSITE PROPERTY
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ O. CONTAMINATION OF SEWERS, STORM DRAINS, WWTPs
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

01 ☐ P. ILLEGAL/UNAUTHORIZED DUMPING
04 NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

02 ☐ OBSERVED (DATE: _____)

☐ POTENTIAL

☐ ALLEGED

05 DESCRIPTION OF ANY OTHER KNOWN, POTENTIAL, OR ALLEGED HAZARDS

III. TOTAL POPULATION POTENTIALLY AFFECTED: _____

IV. COMMENTS

V. SOURCES OF INFORMATION (Cite specific references, e.g., state files, sample analysis reports)

"Notification of Hazardous Waste Site", filed 6/81 (with attachment by B.U.G.)

Katherine Hartnett, Technical Analyst, Brooklyn Union Gas Company
NYSDEC Site Inspection Report, prepared by Vernon Plummer, 8/8/86